

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3613

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS : PINS PINT VS

SUBJECT: PRESS AND OTHER OPINION ON CEASEFIRE II: A NEW
OPTIMISM APPEARS

REF: SAIGON 10973

1. SAIGON PRESS COVERAGE SINCE JUNE 21 HAS TAKEN A NOTICEABLY
MORE OPTIMISTIC TONE ON CEASEFIRE- RELATED ISSUES THAN AT ANY
TIME SINCE CEASEFIRE II WENT INTO EFFECT. THIS MAY BE DUE PARTLY
TO GVN PRESS ADVICE TO THE NEWSPAPERS, BUT IT MAY ALSO REP-
RESENT GENUINE SECOND THOUGHTS ON WHAT THE PARIS COMMUNIQUE
REALLY MEANS, ESPECIALLY AS THE INITIAL CONCERN WEARS OFF
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ABOUT " AREAS OF CONTROL." PUBLIC UTTERANCES BY POLITICAL LEADERS NOT CARRIED IN THE PRESS ARE LIKEWISE SHOWING THE SAME HOPEFUL TONE.

2. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE EXCEPTIONS, SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS JUNE 21 SPOKE OF WHAT OPPOSITION DIEN TIN CALLED " OPTIMISTIC DEVELOPMENTS." THAT PAPER NOTED PARTICULARLY THAT, WHILE MILITARY CLASHES HAVE PERSISTED, THERE HAS BEEN A SLACKENING OF LAND-GRABBING ACTIONS. DIEN TIN' S EDITORIAL THE SAME DAY COMMENTED THAT THE NIXON/ BREZHNEV MEETING AND THE COOPERATIVE SPIRIT AMONG THE GREAT POWERS THAT IT MANIFESTS ARE A FAVORABLE SIGN OF PEACE IN INDO CHINA. THE PRESS ON JUNE 22 AND 23 FOCUSED ON SPECULATIVE NEWS ABOUT CONTINUING DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES. THE PRESENCE IN SAIGON OF THE HEAD OF THE GVN PARIS DELEGATION, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN LUU VIEN, WAS VIEWED AS SIGNIFICANT, MORE THAN ONE PAPER PREDICTING THAT HE WOULD RETURN TO PARIS WITH NEW INSTRUCTIONS.

3. A SPEECH BY UPPER HOUSE CHAIRMAN NGUTEN VAN HUYEN ON ARMED FORCES DAY JUNE 19, WHILE LESS PROMINENT THAT PRESIDENT THIEU' S SPEECH ON THAT OCCASION REPORTED SEPTEL, CARRIED AN OPTIMISTIC NOTE SIMILAR TO THAT SEEN LATER IN THE PRESS. HE SAID THAT " PROSPECTS OF PEACE ARE NOW BETTER THAN EVER." HUYEN CITED THE JANUARY ACCORD, THE JUNE 13 COMMUNIQUE, AND " CURRENT DIPLOMATIC DEVELOPMENTS" AS EVIDENCE OF A " TREND FAVORABLE TO PEACE."

4. AS THE DIEN TIN COVERAGE DESCRIBED ABOVE CLEARLY SUGGESTS, A MAJOR ELEMENT IN THIS NEW OPTIMISM IS THE REDUCTION CURRENTLY SEEN IN THE LEVEL OF HOSTILITIES. COUNTRYWIDE, THE FIGHTING HAS DROPPED MARKEDLY. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TWO PROVINCES, KONTUM IN THE HIGHLANDS AND CHUONG THIEN IN THE DELTA, COMBAT HAS RETURNED TO THE LOW LEVELS OF LATE APRIL AND EARLY MAY, WHICH SAW THE LEAST CONTACT OF THE ENTIRE PERIOD BETWEEN CEASE-FIRES I AND II.
WHITEHOUSE

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